

# **Voting Place Layout Requirements**

## **Provided in Title 21-A, Maine Law on Elections**

### Section 627. Arrangement of Voting Place.

- The ballot box must be arranged so it is in view of persons present.
- Each voting booth must be arranged so those outside the guardrail enclosure can see who enters and leaves it. (See section 629 regarding the number of voting booths.)
- A guardrail must be constructed so that only those inside its enclosure can approach within 6 feet of the ballot box and voting booths. “Guardrail” is not defined in the law, however, there must be a physical barrier to enclose the voting area – such as a rope and stanchions, chairs, tables or some combination of physical elements that form a barrier enclosing the voting activity and separating it from the observation activity.
- The voting place must be large enough to allow at least 1 worker from each political party (D, G and R) to remain outside the guardrail as a poll watcher. They must be able to see and hear all activity of voting within the guardrail, including the voters stating their names at check-in and the election clerk repeating the names for checking off the voting list.

### Section 629. Voting Booths.

- For a general election (the November election in even-numbered year) there is a requirement for a minimum number of voting booths based on the number of voters. There must be 1 voting booth for each 200 voters or fraction over 100 voters (this includes those voters with active status only).
- For elections other than general elections (primary, referendum), the municipal officers may provide fewer than the minimum used for general elections, when circumstances indicate fewer booths will be adequate to provide for the orderly flow of voters.
- In addition to this minimum number of regular booths, for all elections, there must be 1 voting booth for persons with disabilities (this is now the Accessible Voting System station required under section 812-A).

### Section 630. Accessible Voting Places.

- As of 7/1/01 all voting places needed to be accessible by state law, meaning that they must meet the requirements for accessible routes of the 1981 Standards of Construction in Title 25, chapter 331. However, since federal laws require accessibility for voting places used for federal elections (Title II of the ADA, and the Help America Vote Act), it is best to follow these accessibility standards to the extent they are more stringent than Title 25, chapter 331. At some point, section 630 will likely be amended to specify the ADA as the standard in state law.

### Section 671. Voting Procedure.

- This addresses the flow of voters in and out of the guardrail enclosure.

### Section 681. Positions at the Voting Place.

- This section limits who can be within the guardrail enclosure to no more than 2 voters in excess of the number of voting booths.
- If sufficient space exists, then party workers and others in addition to the minimum 3 poll watchers pursuant to section 627 are allowed to remain outside the guardrail enclosure to observe the process.

### Section 812-A. Accessible Voting System.

- This section requires that each municipality shall provide 1 AVS at each voting place used in the conduct of state elections. (Pursuant to the Help America Vote Act, the voting place must be physically accessible per Title II of the ADA, so that voters with disabilities may access the building and voting area within the building to use the AVS or vote with assistance if that is their choice.)

**Refer to the links below for information about physical accessibility of voting places under the ADA guidelines:**

[www.access-board.gov/adaag/html/adaag.htm](http://www.access-board.gov/adaag/html/adaag.htm)  
[www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/stdspdf.htm](http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/stdspdf.htm)